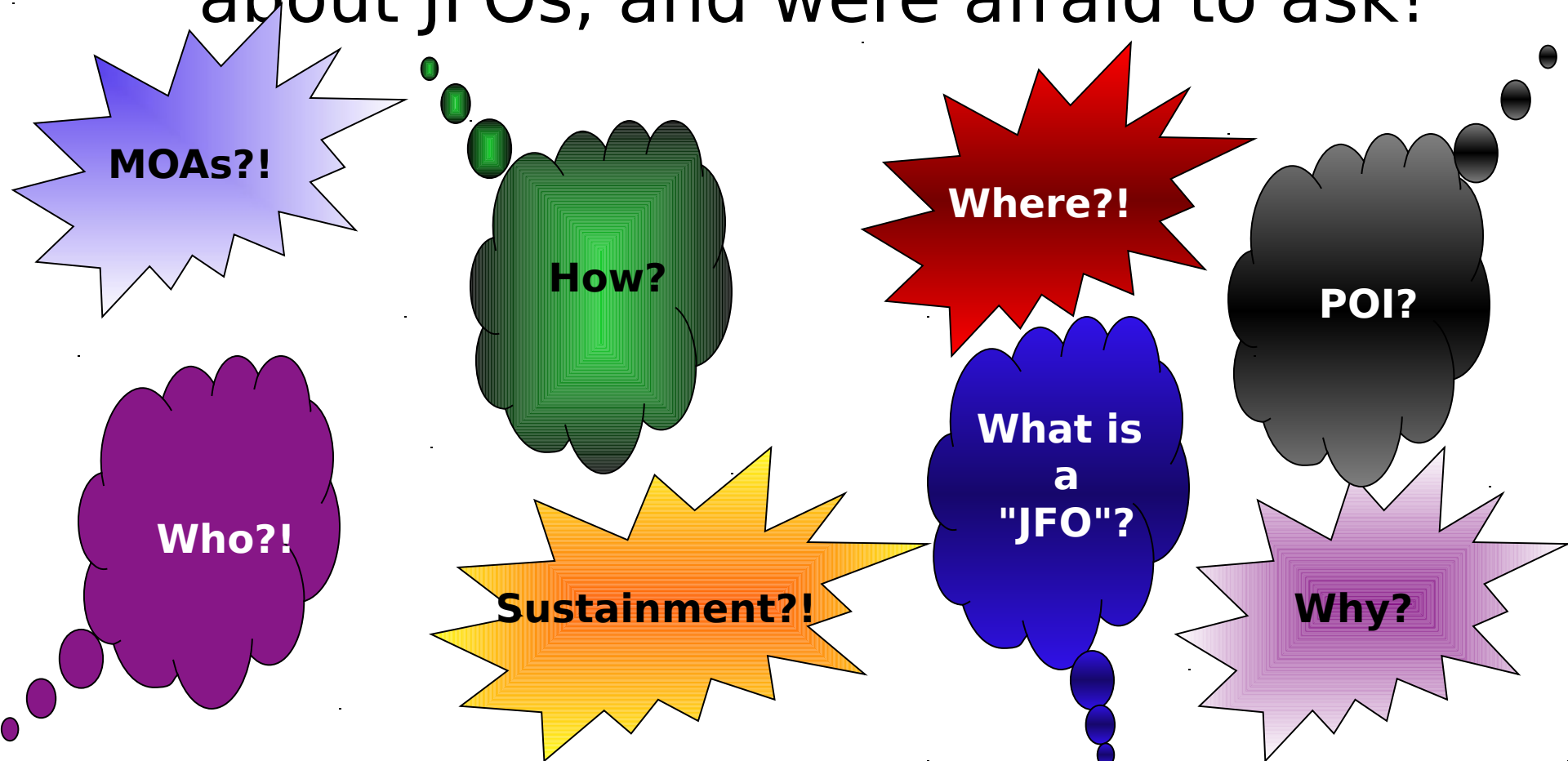
Joint Fires Observer 101

Everything that you wanted to know about JFOs, and were afraid to ask!



JFO Definition

“ A trained service member who can request, adjust, and control surface-to-surface fires, provide targeting information in support of Type 2 and 3 CAS terminal attack controls, and perform autonomous Terminal Guidance Operations (TGO)"

-Joint Fires Observer Memorandum Of Agreem

Really nothing new for Army fire supporters, but formalizing the joi

JFO Memorandum of Agreement

- Signatories:
  - Department of the Army
  - Department of the Air Force
  - Special Operations Command
- The Navy and Marine Corps continue to study feasibility and will "wait and see"
- MOA establishes JFO JMTL

  Duty Area 01
  Engage Targets with Ground Surface-to-Surface Fires
  Duty Area 02
  Engage Targets with Naval Surface Fires
  Duty Area 03
  Engage Targets with Air to Ground Fires
  Duty Area 04
  Conduct Terminal Guidance Operations
- Standardizes certification, qualification, and currency requirements

Why JFOs?

- Army requirement: Terminal Attack Control capability down to maneuver company level
  - Air Force Increasing JTAC Authorizations/Structure Beginning FY06, but will increase from 622 (FY05) to 1019 (FY12); only 70 per year
- Army JFO Requirement: One JFO per maneuver platoon
- JTAC-JFO Train and Fight as “One Team”
  - Experienced Platoon FO + JFOC = JFO

Who can be a JFO?

- Personnel assigned or selected for duty as a:
  - Company Fire Support Officer (FSO)
  - Company Fire Support NCO (FSNCO)
  - Platoon Forward Observer (FO)
  - Member of a Combat Observation Lasing Team (COLT)
  - Member of a scout / reconnaissance organization

Initial focus for training will be the 13F community

How do we get JFOs

- JFO Training sites at Fort Sill, OK
- Working on getting course into ATRRS
  - 17 classes offered at Fort Sill for FY08
    - http://sill-www.army.mil/jcid/
    - ATSF-JD.sill@us.army.mil
    - POC: DSN 639-8664/2252/2258

Generic Course Schedule

- 10 day course
- Students graduate as certified, with ASI, and return to unit with training folder
- 27.5 hours of classroom instruction
- 28 hours simulation training
- Live CAS Training

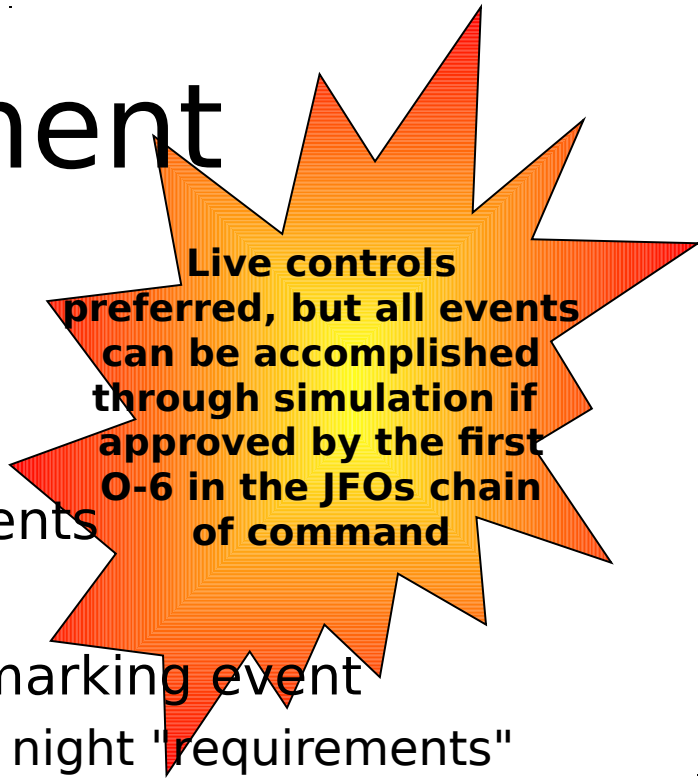
JFO Training Jacket

- The JFO evaluation folder (training jacket) consists of a 4-part documentation system
  - Part I: Commanders designation letter
    - Section contains a copy of the JFO current designation letter and a copy of any previous designation letters, if applicable.
  - Part II: Documentation of training
    - Section contains a record of all training events in a legible format and must be in compliance with this document's currency requirements. This section should contain records of all required JFO MOA training performed since initial certification.
  - Part III: Documentation of evaluations
    - Section contains documentation of all evaluations conducted since initial certification.
  - Part IV:JFO formal school diplomas
    - Section contains copies of any certificates received from attending a formal JFO course.

JFO Sustainment

- JFOs must maintain a training jacket to track training and currency
  - Senior 13F in each BCT responsible for managing JFO training and currency
  - JFOs must seek out JTACs to conduct training
  - ASOS trains with JFOs where possible, but not responsible for administering JFO training program

JFO Sustainment


Live controls preferred, but all events can be accomplished through simulation if approved by the first O-6 in the JFOs chain of command

- Semi-annual requirements:
  - 6 fixed or rotary wing events
    - 2 x Live/simulated laser TGO events
    - 1 x Live Type II control w/JTAC
    - 1 x Live/simulated night target marking event
      - Laser TGO counts if done within night "requirements"
    - 1 x Simulated Type I control
    - 1 x Live/simulated Abort
  - 6 x Live/simulated surface-to-surface call for fire events
  - 1 x Live/simulated AC130 call for fire event

Operational JFO Equipment

- Need
  - SINCGARS Radio
  - IR Strobe light
    - SDU-39N Distress Marker Strobe Light
  - IR pointer

    IZLID 1000
  - VS17 Marker Panel(s)
- Good to have
  - AN/PRC117F
  - AN/PRC 148
  - SeeSPOT III Thermal Scope
  - SMP 1000 or 2000 Microponder
  - Green Beam Pointer
  - Laser Eye Protection

Summary